1:Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952
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with clay. In Igarapé na'inẽ-tʃ I saw the remains of a structure of this kind, which had been inhabited until about fifty years ago. 342

Midway in the wall of the roof bay at either end was a door (i"'ya) made of a special and very durable thatching called čatʃ" and small poles of paxiuba. The door was completely free from the house and was removed and propped at one side when not in use; it was closed from the inside by a crossbeam.

These houses were tightly constructed in order to serve as a refuge from mosquitoes, for, unlike the Omágua, the Tukuna formerly did not have the mosquito net. Through contact with the Neobrazilians, however, they at once recognized the enormous advantage that this article offers in a region permanently scourged by mosquitoes, and today mosquito nets are found in all Tukuna houses. [177] [352]

Modification of house type.—The introduction of the mosquito net completely altered the style of dwelling. Since it was no longer necessary to seal the house hermetically, the walls were abandoned, and today they are only rarely seen. Many Tukuna also gave up one or both of the semicircular roof bays, lengthening the central section to compensate for this, so that an open, rectangular shelter finally resulted. This is probably the type to which Tessmann refers when he speaks of the quadrangular Tukuna houses.

Formerly the Tukuna dwelt exclusively on firm ground, and the construction of their houses was not suitable to another environment. After they spread out along the banks and islands of the Solimões, many found their dwellings periodically invaded by the flooding river. They were therefore obliged either to live on a platform of poles, like the Omágua of old, or to move temporarily to more solid ground.

Occasionally I encountered a type of structure for which I have no certain explanation, namely, a rectangular house of small dimensions (3 by 4 m.) resting on tall poles 2 m. high or more. This construction is certainly not an adaptation to the floods, for the houses I saw were all on solid ground. With one exception, all were found in the yard of a larger and more usual house.

These little dwellings are always inhabited by bachelors or by newlyweds; I am therefore inclined to regard them as derived from the small "loft" which is always found below the highest part of the thatched roof and more or less at the same level as these separate houses. These lofts also serve as dormitories for bachelors or newlyweds. According to the Tukuna, the small houses are a recent innovation, adopted by their inhabitants "because they thought it better that way." Perhaps the innovation is due to the growing individualism of the new generation. It does not appear to me to be an element borrowed from another native culture. [176]

With the exception of a few dwellings of some Tukuna who snobbishly vie with one another in copying the shanties of the Neobrazilians, the houses of these Indians are even today outstanding because of the elegance of their light yet strong furnishings, and their ample and spacious construction. On the Jacurapá, a tributary of the Içá, I measured one that was 31 by 15 m., and 10 m. high, yet this was not one of the largest.

These Indians construct such spacious dwellings because their villages have no houses exclusively for festivities and, since all celebrations stem from private ini- [345]

[5] T., na-rʃ-hoŋ, "tongue of antester."